

Architecture & Construction

The Architecture & Construction Career Cluster includes careers that allow you to design, plan, manage, build, and maintain machinery or structures, such as buildings, homes, and bridges. People employed in this cluster work on new structures, restorations, additions, alterations, and repairs [careertech.org].

Joey Dawson's fascination with carpentry started as a child, when he snuck into his grandfather's woodworking shop to build small jewelry boxes, frames, and signs.

A self-described busybody, "it focused my attention and energy to know I could take just a couple of piles of board and turn them into something, that I could give to somebody or have," Joey says. "That meant a lot to me."

Today, Joey has turned his passion into his job. He's the owner of Dawson Custom Woodworking, Inc., which remodels and builds homes and manufactures custom cabinets and furniture. He started the company when he was 18 years old, logging \$80 thousand in sales the first year. The firm now has four full-time employees, made \$1.5 million in sales in 2014, and works with several subcontractors.

Joey still uses the skills he picked up in high school. As a builder and contractor you have to be a jack of all trades, Joey says.

"Classes that were hands-on were what meant the most to me," he says, citing the impact of his CTE and mathematics classes. After high school, Joey received his Class A Contractor license and became certified through the Kitchen Builder program.

by Veronica Garabelli



Photo by Mark Rhodes

What they make

Occupation	Employed in Va. ¹	Median wage ²	Predominant level of education
Carpenters	24,834	\$37,540	High school diploma, certification
Construction supervisors	21,411	\$57,900	High school diploma
Electricians	18,681	\$44,820	High school diploma, certification
Plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters	12,982	\$43,530	High school diploma, certification
Construction managers	12,263	\$91,690	High school diploma
Construction equipment operators	9,525	\$35,990	High school diploma, certification
Heating, AC, and refrigeration mechanics	9,169	\$42,680	High school diploma, certification
Civil engineers	8,716	\$78,140	Bachelor's degree
Cost estimators	7,774	\$59,050	Associate degree
Sheet metal workers	5,442	\$41,160	High school diploma, certification
Cement masons and concrete finishers	4,484	\$34,570	High school diploma, certification
Architects	3,444	\$77,990	Bachelor's degree, certification
Electrical power-line installers and repairers	2,923	\$58,780	High school diploma, certification
Brickmasons and blockmasons	2,919	\$41,650	High school diploma, certification
Civil engineering technicians	2,831	\$41,610	Associate degree
Structural iron and steel workers	1,960	\$39,510	High school diploma, certification
Interior designers	1,472	\$53,760	Bachelor's degree, certification
Surveyors	1,377	\$49,880	Bachelor's degree
Architectural and civil drafters	1,483	\$48,180	Associate degree
Landscape architects	800	\$66,120	Bachelor's degree, certification

¹2012 ²2013

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Virginia Employment Commission, Trailblazers

Joey Dawson

Owner and President, Dawson Custom Woodworking, Inc., DCW Rental Properties, LLC, Rustburg

High school: Rustburg High School, Campbell County Public Schools

CTE studies: Technical Drawing and Design; Engineering Drawing and Design; Architectural Drawing and Design; Materials and Processes Technology



For more information about career planning, visit the CTE Resource Center's Web site.

